

REMARKS

35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claim 7 has been canceled.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 5, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Felten et al. (US 4,239,579) or Felten (US 3,816,218). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons. Claim 5 has been amended to further recite a pair of support rings, each support ring being positioned between the radially expandable segments and a bead lock, wherein as the segments expand and the bead locks move axially inwardly, the support rings move under the segments. As Felten et al. '579 or Felten '218 fail to anticipate the invention as recited in amended claim 5, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilde et al. (US 4,131,500) taken in view of Byerley (US 6,457,505). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons. Claim 8 has been canceled.

In light of this amendment, all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

/June E. Rickey/

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